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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4256  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001983

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: HOME MINISTER SITAULA: NO DECISIONS BEFORE UN  
ASSESSMENT TEAM ARRIVES

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

SUMMARY

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[¶1.](#) (C) On July 24, Home Minister and GON negotiation team leader Krishna Sitaula told DCM that the GON and the Maoists would agree on an arms management strategy after meeting with the UN assessment team, scheduled to arrive on July 26. Home Minister Sitaula assured DCM that the Maoists would not enter the interim government before they completely disarmed, and speculated that disarmament and constituent assembly elections could happen within a year. He promised to provide details of the UN meeting and insight into the GON plan in a couple of weeks. End Summary.

FIRST THE UN ASSESSMENT, THEN A TALK WITH MAOISTS  
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[¶2.](#) (C) On July 24, Home Minister and GON negotiation team leader Krishna Sitaula said that the GON would not make any decisions regarding the management of Maoist and Nepal Army weapons until the UN assessment team evaluated the situation. Sitaula said that after the GON meets with the UN team, scheduled to arrive in Kathmandu on July 26, the GON will then talk to the Maoists. Sitaula stressed that the GON and the Maoists should reach an arms management decision through consensus.

[¶3.](#) (C) Home Minister Sitaula stated that the issue of arms management was a very difficult and critical subject on which the legitimacy of the GON depended. Sitaula said that an effective solution for the management of arms would ease the fear of the people of Nepal and increase their confidence in the government. He expressed hope that the UN team, which he said would also meet with the Maoists, would provide suggestions for arms management. He acknowledged DCM's observation that the UN team would expect guidelines from the GON, but did not reveal whether he had any in mind.

DISARMAMENT BEFORE ELECTIONS, ALL WITHIN A YEAR  
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[¶4.](#) (C) Sitaula speculated that the arms issue would be settled within two or three months, and that constituent assembly elections would occur within six to eight months

afterwards (the GON target date is April 2007). He confirmed that arms management must be completed--not merely in process--before the formation of an interim government. When DCM pointed out that the Maoists have been making contradictory statements, Sitaula reiterated that the GON would talk to the UN team and then to the Maoists.

A PROMISE OF MORE DETAILS LATER  
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¶5. (C) The Home Minister assured DCM that the GON would discuss details with us after the UN visit. He reminded us that Nepal needed support from the United States and India. Sitaula promised to talk again in about two weeks, when the GON would have a better idea of a plan of action.

COMMENT  
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¶6. (C) Home Minister Sitaula repeatedly deflected DCM's questions about the political situation and the definition of arms management. Sitaula's comments on reaching a consensus with the Maoists on disarmament seem wildly optimistic. To date, we have seen nothing that would indicate the Maoists are willing to disarm. Throughout the meeting, Sitaula appeared shifty and refused to engage in candid dialogue. The Home Minister appears out of his depth, and anxious to avoid at almost any cost mistakes that could jeopardize the peace.

MORIARTY